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Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 SP-02 AID-05 L-03 PA-01
PRS-01 USIA-06 DHA-02 PM-04 DODE-00 IGA-02 /066 W
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R 132010Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9984
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 2691

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, ILO, AR
SUBJECT: VISIT OF DANIEL L. HOROWITZ, USG REPRESENTATIVE TO ILO

REF: (A) STATE 49411, (B) BUENOS AIRES 1944

1. SUMMARY. IN ONE DAY OF TALKS, APRIL 4, MR. HOROWITZ THOROUGHLY BRIEFED KEY LABOR AND FONMIN OFFICIALS ON US POSITION AND EXPECTATIONS. LABOR MINISTER, WHO HAS PRINCIPAL POLICY MAKING RESPONSIBILITY WITH RESPECT TO ILO, EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR US POSITION, ALTHOUGH FINAL DECISION RESTS WITH PRESIDENT. A WELL PLACED EXTRAOFFICIAL SOURCE INFORMS US THAT THE MINISTER HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY PERSUADED, SEEING MUTUALITY OF INTEREST FOR ARGENTINE IN ILO'S RETURNING TO DUE PROCESS AND EQUAL TREATMENT FOR ALL NATIONS, MINISTRY, HOWEVER, SUBTLY PLAYED HOROWITZ VISIT CONFIDENTIAL

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TO PRESS AS DIPLOMATIC VICTORY FOR GOA IN TERMS OF LINING UP US SUPPORT FOR GOA POSITION IN ILO. END SUMMARY.

2. HOROWITZ MADE FORMAL PRESENTATION OF US POSITION IN SESSIONS WITH (A) LABOR MINISTER GENERAL HORACIO TOMAS LIENDO AT THE LABOR MINISTRY, AND (B) THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AFFAIRS, MINISTER FERNANDO LUIS

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M. RICCIARDI. IN THESE SESSIONS HOROWITZ THOROUGHLY ARTICULATED SAME POINTS HE COVERED PREVIOUSLY IN OTHER LATIN AMERICAN CAPITALS, INCLUDING: THE TRENDS WHICH LED TO THE SECRETARY'S NOVEMBER 5, 1975 LETTER SERVING NOTICE OF US INTENT TO WITHDRAW FROM ILO UNLESS SUFFICIENT COUNTER TRENDS WERE PERCEIVED; THE US DESIRE TO MAKE MAXIMUM EFFORT DURING THE TWO-YEAR STATUTORY PERIOD TO PROMOTE CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD PERMIT OUR CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE ILO; THE PROMISING RESULTS OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING OF MARCH 1976 IN WHICH THE GB APPROVED OUR AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 17 OF THE ILO STANDING ORDERS PROVIDING FOR SPECIAL SCREENING MACHINERY AND IN WHICH THE GB VOTED TO ACCEPT THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S RECOMMENDATION TO "CLOSE THE BOOK" ON THE 1974 CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL WITHOUT DUE PROCESS; AND THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE WHICH WE ATTACHED TO THE OUTCOME OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE IN JUNE. HOROWITZ SPECIFICALLY ASKED FOR GOA SUPPORT TO ENSURE THAT THE PERTINENT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE ITSELF (A) APPROVE THE USG-SPONSORED AMENDMENT; (B) RESIST ANY EFFORT TO REINTRODUCE THE CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL WITHOUT INVESTIGATION OR INTORDUCE OTHER ESOLUTIONS CONDEMNING ANY COUNTRY WITHOUT ADHERING TO THE ILO'S DULY ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES; AND (C) DESIST FROM THE UNFORTUNATE PRACTICE OF RECENT YEARS OF TREATING NATIONS UNEQUALLY WHEN REVIEWING REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON APPLICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS.

3. ACCOMPANYING THE LABOR MINISTER AT THE MEETING WERE HIS TWO UNDERSECRETARIES, ARMY COLONEL CARLOS LONGO AND NAVY CAPT ROBERTO DALL'ASTA, AND LEGAL ADVISOR DR. GABRIEL AMARO.
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ALSOPRESENT (AT GEN. LIENDO'S INVITATION) WAS ARGENTINE EMPLOYER DELEGATE AND EMPLOYER VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE GB, DR. ANTONIO VITAIC. VITAIC, A YUGOSLAV EMIGRE, FULLY UNDERSTANDS AND SUPPORTS THE US POSITION AND ASSISTED HOROWITZ BY EXPLAINING TO LIENDO IN CLEAR-CUT LANGUAGE THE ESSENCE OF WHAT WE WERE SEEKING TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE ILO, AS WELL AS THE REPERCUSSIONS OF A US PULL OUT. (WE UNDERSTAND THAT VITAIC IS A LONG-TIME MINISTRY ADVISOR WHO ENJOYS LIENDO'S CONFIDENCE.) VITAIC EMPHASIZED OBVIOUS POINT THAT ARGENTINE HAD A MUTUAL INTEREST IN RECEIVING EQUAL TREATMENT AND IN RENDERING "NON-RECEIVABLE" THOSE RESOLUTION WHICH CONDEMN NATIONS WITHOUT INVESGIATION OR WHICH OTHERWISE VIOLATE DUE PROCESS. IN RESPONSE, LIENDO SAID HE WAS SYMPATHETIC TO THE US POSITION, BUT WOULD HAVE TO CONSULT WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA AND FOREIGN MINISTER GUZZETTI BEFORE HE COULD COMMIT GOA. (VITAIC LATER TOLD HOROWITZ THAT THE DECISION ESSENTIALLY WAS IN THE LABOR MINISTRY'S DOMAIN AND THAT LIENDO HAD BEEN EFFECTIVELY PERSUADED AS TO THE WISDOM FROM GOA'S VIEWPOINT OF SUPPORTING THE US INITIATIVE.)

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PRS-01 USIA-06 DHA-02 PM-04 DODE-00 IGA-02 /066 W
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 2691

4. ALTHOUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S PROTOCOL OFFICE INITIALLY INFORMED US THAT HOROWITZ' MEETING WITH LABOR MINISTER WOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR GOA PURPOSES AND ANOTHER SESSION AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD BE REDUNDANT, MINISTER RICCIARDI WAS GRATEFUL FOR MR. HOROWITZ' CALL, HE LISTENED ATTENTIVELY AND PROMISED TO INFORM HIS SUPERIORS OF THE US POSITION. AT RICCIARDI'S REQUEST, EMBASSY SUBSEQUENTLY DELIVERED AIDE MEMOIRE UPDATING THE INFORMATION CONTINED IN OUR PREVIOUS MEMORANDUM OF FEBRUARY 11, 1977 (ESSENTIALLY COVERING THE RESULTS OF THE GB MEETING OF MARCH, THE ISSUES FACING THE JUNE CONFERENCE AND US EXPECTATIONS, AND THE DEPARTMENT'S STATE-MENT OF FEBRUARY 16).

5. HOROWITZ HAD OPPORTUNITY TO FURTHER EXPAND ON ILO PROBLEMS AT LUNCHEON IN HIS HONOR HOSTED BY GENERAL LIENDO AND AT
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COCKTAIL HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR. A NUMBER OF HIGH RANKING LABOR AND FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS WERE PRESENT AT BOTH GATHERINGS, IN ADDITION TO VITAIC AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE ILO'S REGIONAL OFFICE IN BUENOS AIRES, DR. PERLA MARINELLI. HOROWITZ ALSO PAID A COURTESY CALL AT THE ILO OFFICE AND INSPECTED ITS INSTALLATIONS, WHICH WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED BY THE STAFF.

6. AT EMBASSY'S SUGGESTION, HOROWITZ MADE NO CONTACT WITH ARGENTINE TRADE UNIONS LEADERS OWING TO THE OFFICIAL SUSPENSION OF UNION ACTIVITIES AND GOA SENSITIVITIES.

7. ASKED WHETHER HE INTENDED TO ATTEND ILO GENERAL CONFERENCE, LIENDO RESPONDED HE HOPED THAT WOULD BE THE CASE. IMPLICATION OF HIS RESPONSE, WE BELIEVE, IS THAT HE EXPECTS TO CONTINUE IN THE CABINET AT LEAST THRU JUNE, AND IS REASONABLY HOPEFUL THAT JUNTA WILL APPROVE THE BASIC GUIDELINES FOR REFORMING THE TRADE UNION LAW PRIOR TO THE CONFERENCE.

8. IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE LABOR MINISTER ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO HOROWITZ' VISIT AND ARRANGED FOR SUBSTANTIAL LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE. THE MINISTRY ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE STATING THAT "OPINIONS WERE EXCHANGED IN SEARCH OF AN AGREEMENT OF THE US AND ARGENTINE POSITIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE POLICIES TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE ILO IN TERMS OF APPLYING INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND WITH RESPECT TO ADOPTING THE MEASURES NECESSARY TO DEPOLITICIZE THE ILO." WHETHER INTENDED OR NOT, THE IMPRESSION GIVEN BY THE MINISTRY TO THE LOCAL PRESS WAS THAT THE HOROWITZ VISIT CONSTITUTED AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS GAINING US SUPPORT FOR THE GOA ATTEMPT TO DEFEND ITSELF IN THE ILO AGAINST ACCUSATIONS OF VIOLATION OF TRADE UNION LIBERTIES IN ARGENTINA. IN SHORT, THE VISIT WAS MISINTERPRETED AS A DIPLOMATIC VICTORY FOR LIENDO IN TERMS OF POSSIBLY OFFSETTING, WITH THE COOPERATION OF THE US DELEGATION, INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES AGAINST ARGENTINA IN THE ILO, NOTWITHSTANDING THE BILATERAL PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE DEVELOPED ON THE GENERAL ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS SINCE OUR FMS CREDIT CUT.
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